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ABSTRACT

Vocational education for 15- to 19-year-olds in England and Australia was compared. Recent literature was reviewed, and 20 individuals concerned with the planning and delivery of vocational education in England were interviewed to identify local and national practices and policies that are worthy of consideration for adoption in Australia. The following were among the topics and specific programs/policies considered: key competencies, politics, funding, Technical and Vocational Education Initiative, National Vocational Qualifications, National Curriculum, General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), apprenticeships, Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), and 1994 National Development Agenda. It was concluded that, although the English system is based on sound concepts whose adoption in Australia merits consideration, many of England's vocational education practices are questionable. The following concepts underlying the English system were praised and recommended for incorporation into Australia's system: GNVQs as a bridge between training and education, TECs as an approach to local control and delivery of training, a national assessment framework, and three-stage funding model. (The bibliography contains 18 references and lists 44 documents examined. Appended is a list of individuals interviewed.) (MN)

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English 15–19 year-olds' vocational education: Some lessons for Australia?

WILLIAM HALL

Discussion paper

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Adelaide 1994

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Contents

Introduction

Abbreviations

1 Background 1
- Employment 1
- The 'market' 6
- Major differences 8
- Educating 15-19 year olds 9
- Key competencies 12
- Politics 14

2 Vocational education for 15-19 year olds 16
- Some comparisons 16
- Australia 18
- England 21
- Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) 22
- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) 23
- The National Curriculum and GNVQs 28
- Criticisms of National Vocational Qualifications 29
- Modern apprenticeships 31
- Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) 32
- Funding 33

3 Vocational education at the local level in England 36
- Training and Enterprise Councils in detail 36
- Criticisms of TECs 40
- The 1994 National Development Agenda 42

4 Some issues to consider 44
- Priority issues 45
- Other issues 46

Bibliography 48

Appendix: Meetings held in England 51

Introduction

Following an invitation from Professor David Waddington of the University of York, the British Council generously gave an Academic Interchange award to the author so that April, 1994, could be spent conducting research in England. The Board of the NCVER kindly supported the visit. This report is the main outcome of the month (others included discussions with university staff, giving a university seminar and meetings with people listed in the appendix).

The report compares and contrasts the vocational education of 15-19 year olds in England and Australia, but with an emphasis on England. Why should such a comparison be of interest to Australians? Firstly, much Australian vocational education has been modelled on England (or Scotland). Secondly, the two countries continue to have much in common, despite the contrary view, sometimes expressed in the media. Thirdly, developments in England (such as the Training and Enterprise Councils, TECs, and the National Vocational Qualifications, NVQs) are of considerable interest to us in this country.

Most of the work was done in the North of England, covering part of North Humberside and part of North Yorkshire. This was because I wanted a regional view, not a view from London or another major metropolitan centre. True, visits were made to London, Sheffield and Manchester, but most of the time was spent in York and surrounding towns.

The report has been based on available recent literature (much of it collected in England), interviews and personal observations. The first (background) chapter leads into Chapters 2 and 3 which deal with vocational education, and (especially) its delivery at the local level. The final chapter highlights policy considerations, as they apply to Australia. The report both suffers and benefits from a quick visit, which included most of the writing of the report.

Because the report has been written for an Australian audience, much detail about Australian vocational education has been omitted. Only when it is useful to highlight some matter, or to make comparisons, is information about Australia given.

William Hall
Executive Director
NCVER, Adelaide
May, 1994

Abbreviations

BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
DE	Employment Department
DFE	Department for Education
EU	European Union
FE (U)	Further Education (Unit)
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
HEFC	Higher Education Funding Council
HND	Higher National Diploma
IIP	Investors in People
ITB	Industry Training Board
ITO	Industry Training Organisation
LA	Local Authority
LEA	Local Education Activity
LEC	Local Enterprise Company
MSC	Manpower Services Commission
NCVQ	National Council for Vocational Qualifications
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
PIC	Private Industry Council
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative

In general, the full terms are given at appropriate places in the report, followed by the abbreviation.

1 Background

In this chapter I shall provide a brief summary of employment in both countries; discuss the 'market', upon which there is so much emphasis in all advanced countries and which seems to be driving much vocational education and training policy at the moment; provide an overview of education in both countries; and mention some aspects of the politics of training.

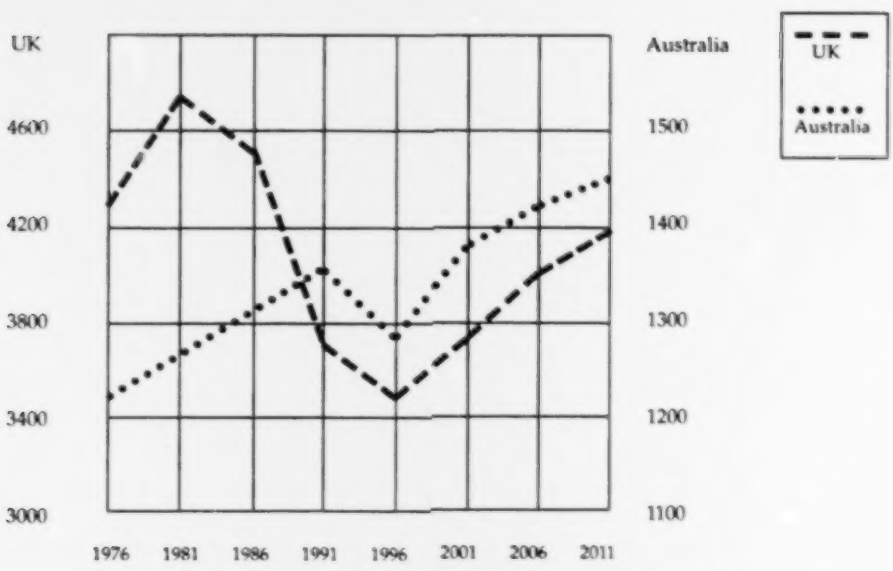
Employment

The 15-19 year old population poses special challenges for both England and Australia. In both countries there has been reduced full-time employment for this age group; partly caused by the fall in the number of tradespeople and the numbers being trained for trades; partly caused by the demand for skilled (rather than unskilled) workers—hence leading to the dying out of junior, unskilled, jobs; and partly because of the increased participation of the 15-19 year old population in education. For Australia, the issues have been discussed by the Committee on Employment Opportunities.

In both countries there is a strong commitment to more training. Important though this is, there are dangers. Training is only one of the variables. Bad management, the emphasis on short-term profit, the making of redundant product or product of poor quality, may contribute to the unemployment problem. Also, although it is important that there should be trained people available to fill jobs, training (of itself) does not create jobs.

The actual and predicted 15-19 year old populations for the period 1976-2011 are shown in Figure 1. The populations are for the whole of the UK, (i.e. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as England) and for Australia. The sharp drop from 1981 to 1996 in the UK raised fears of a scarcity of young people in the workforce. The recession removed that fear.

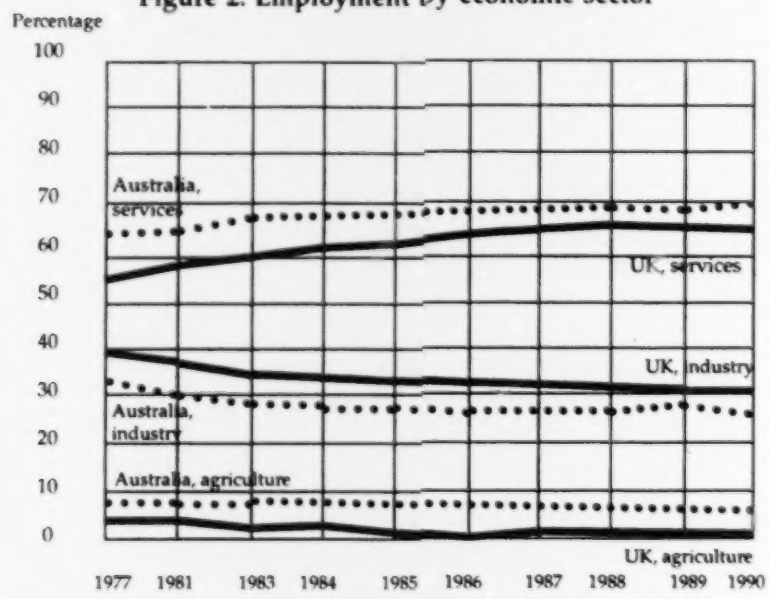
Figure 1: 15-19 year olds (000s)



SOURCES: ANNUAL ABSTRACT OF STATISTICS, 1991 (UK); ABS (AUSTRALIA)

The nature of employment in both countries has changed in similar ways, as shown in Figure 2 for the three broad categories 'services', 'industry' and 'agriculture'.

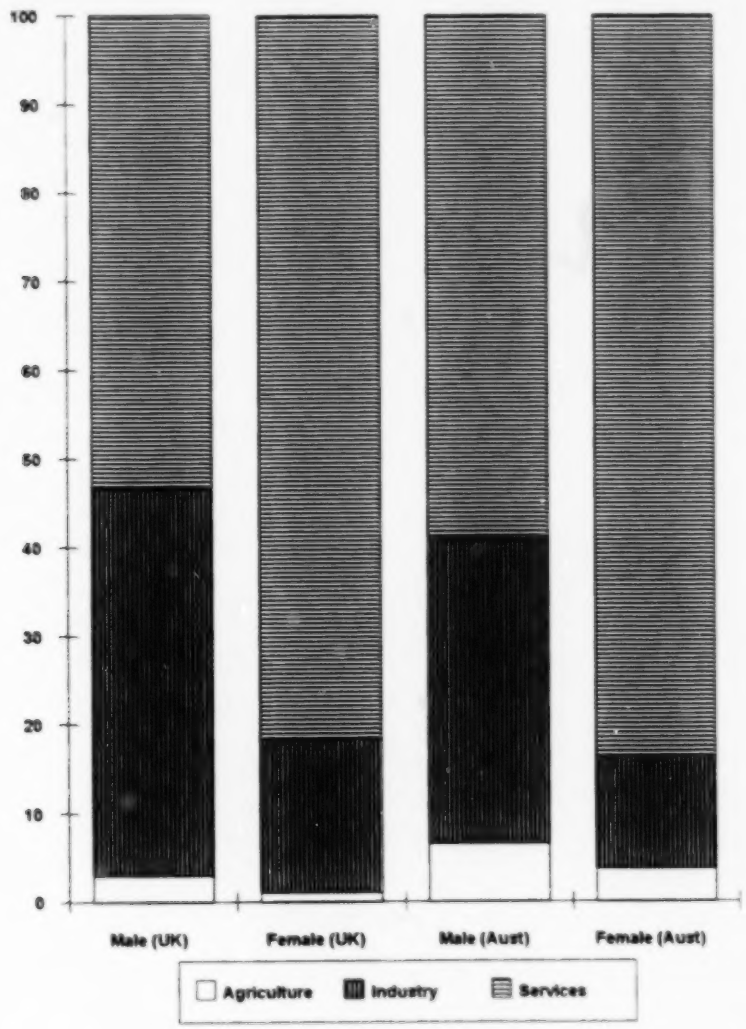
Figure 2: Employment by economic sector



SOURCES: EUROSTAT LABOUR FORCE SURVEYS (UK); ABS (AUSTRALIA)

Percentages of people employed in the three broad categories are shown in Figure 3 for both countries. The breakdown is for male and female populations. So both countries are heavily services-orientated, in marked contrast to Germany, which is far more manufacturing-orientated, an important factor usually ignored by those who would transfer the German approach to Australia. (Over 40% of the German workforce is employed in manufacturing.)

Figure 3: Percentages of employed people according to sector, 1990



SOURCES: EUROSTAT: LABOUR FORCE SURVEYS (UK), ABS (AUSTRALIA)

The percentages of people employed in various occupations are shown in Figure 4. (The comparisons may not be interpreted too closely because of differences in definition. Nevertheless, the broad picture is reasonably valid.)

Figure 4: Percentages employed in various occupations, 1990

UK		AUSTRALIA	
Energy and water	2.2	Electricity, gas and water	1.3
Mineral extraction and chemicals	3.1	Mining	1.2
Metal manufacture, engineering	9.9		
other manufacturing	9.0	Manufacturing	13.1
Building and civil engineering	8.0	Construction	5.9
Distributive trades, hotels	20.3	Wholesale and retail trade	18.8
Transport and communication	6.2	Transport and storage	4.6
		Communication	1.6
Banking, finance, insurance	11.3	Finance, property and business services	11.1
Public administration	6.1	Public administration and defence	5.7
Other services	21.7	Community services	17.7
		Recreational, personal and other services	7.0

SOURCES: EUROSTAT: LABOUR FORCE SURVEYS (UK), ABS (AUSTRALIA)
(AUSTRALIA DOES NOT ADD UP TO 100% BECAUSE OF 'NOT STATED' OR 'NOT CLASSIFIABLE' RESPONSES.)

The Trustee Savings Bank research report 'Major's Children 1994' covered a survey of 600 English 12-18 year olds. The *Independent* newspaper reported on the survey on 30th April, 1994, as follows: 'About a quarter were 'grey conformists' in the mould of the Prime Minster: content to drift along with the majority view, settling down to family life. A similar number were nascent tycoons, allegedly keen to emulate the success of Richard Branson. The rest, apparently, are either somnolent couch potatoes, glued to the screen for a quarter of their working hours, or party animals, drinking and drugging themselves senseless through fear of adult life, unemployment and Aids ...'

Unemployment levels in both countries are about the same, but with one important difference. There are large areas of England where unemployment is extremely high (as high as 80% of men) and where school leavers only have a one-in-ten chance of getting work. The removal of traditional 'working class' labour (such as in the coal industry and steel works) which required no formal

education, and where jobs were repetitive, has produced very major unemployment and other social problems in the North of England. Not least of all, the cohesive nature of working-class society has been destroyed. Some would say that this was part of the political design. Others would say that it is one inevitable consequence of the painful transition process from a 19th Century to a 21st Century economy. Whatever the reason, the traditional English working class is no longer the cohesive force it once was.

The economies of both countries went into recession but both are now climbing out of it. Indeed there is an air of political optimism about current trends. The *Times* of April 26th, 1994 reflected this optimism: 'The economy continued to grow at a steady pace in the first three months of this year, finally clawing back the ground lost during the recession' (p.23).

Of course, there are difficulties with comparing training and vocational education in different countries, because quite different structures and philosophies may prevail. For example, Germany has what is described as a 'dual' system (presently showing some cracks); the USA has a 'schooling' system; England and Australia have mixed approaches. However, England did scrap its apprenticeship system, but has recently decided to reintroduce 'modern apprenticeships', which are described in Chapter 3. Their reintroduction may be mostly a marketing exercise, an opinion reinforced by the way in which they were handled.

In both countries it now seems to be acknowledged that planning for the demand side of the economy has not worked, so governments have switched their attention to the supply side. (The switch to the supply side is not new. It started about 20 years ago. It is being reinforced because government spending increases are no longer desirable and wage cuts are not practicable.) The way to 'improve' the supply side is to train it, even though neither country has a strong training culture. As the *Economist* has pointed out, almost everyone is in favour of training, including educators because they are in demand, and governments because training is both 'pro-market' and 'pro-worker'. (However, managers sometimes complain that they are training workers for other people.)

In both countries there is a belief that the 'warehousing' of young people in labour market programmes is no solution to unemployment, because such programmes do not create jobs—they just keep some young people temporarily off the streets. (Incidentally, it was pointed out to me that every educational reform in England over the past century has had as its main aim the reduction of unemployment.)

The market

Both countries are heavily 'market' orientated, with England being much further along that road. This applies to most aspects of employment, including public utilities, health, transport and vocational education.

'Freeing the market' is a catchcry in both countries, and 'market growth' (apparently regardless of local, national or international consequences) is what often seems to matter most. Interestingly, many in England would agree that there had to be major changes because 'things had got out of control' (usually meaning that money was being wasted); but those same people are now highly critical of the changes introduced by the policies of the right-wing of the Conservative Party, and did not believe them possible for vocational education when first discussed in general terms. Nevertheless, they are now being implemented.

Of course the 'market' is a reality, but should its needs be the main driving force, is a question being debated. Some people are saying that we need to 'get back to basics' in a very real sense, and not merely be carried along by 'market' protagonists.

As Dr David Gowland, an economist at the University of York, pointed out in my discussions with him, in any consideration of the 'market' there must be answers to the fundamental questions:

- who pays?
- who chooses?
- who provides?
- who owns the means of provision?

Applied to vocational education and training, in both England and Australia, it is clear that a purist approach to the 'market' is presently quite impossible. A marginal approach is the best the protagonists can hope for; and added to this, in Australia a classical anti-market decision has been made, that is—whenever there is a problem, set up a new agency. Nevertheless, even a marginal approach can have a big impact, as is being experienced in England.

The 'market' has not been without its public critics, one of the chief of them being Dr David Jenkins, the Bishop of Durham. He criticises the market argument because, firstly, the current use of the term is spurious. "We do not have a true market but a mythology created by ideology," he said. "Others decide what is to be offered: freedom of choice is linked to what you don't want. Also, there is no such thing as a 'market' but a set of markets that interact. So the notion of a single market is wrong. Although free choice is the highest form of virtue, it must be good choice and the products or services available must be useful." However (according to critics like the Bishop) the 'market' in England is not productive; it is manipulative; it is short-term; investment is not highly regarded—what matters is making money. There are signs that some economists, and some leading member of the City, are becoming concerned about this.

'Market' is current jargon in vocational education in England, as well as in Australia. What lies behind this in England (at least in part) is lack of trust of the professional, the achievement of political aims through 'competition' and every decision being based on 'the bottom line'. "People seem to be on a tiger which they cannot get off", said Dr Jenkins.

There seems to be little obvious account of social conscience. In other words, the impression gained is that the 'market' is in control, people do not control it.

In his book *God, Politics and the Future* the Bishop of Durham asks 'Is it prudent and sustainable to have "the Market" as our main model about our world for the future? ... Those who can get the cheapest labour and the brightest ideas exploit for a bit until they themselves are driven out by others' (p.20).

It is especially important within vocational education and training to remember that we are dealing with people, not 'market' commodities. That is why this short section is included.

I am certainly *not* questioning that vocational education and training must be client-orientated. It must be. I am questioning whether the 'bottom line' is the best way of achieving that orientation.

One problem when discussing this issue is that terms like 'labour market' are frequently being used in various ways in both countries. For example, it is (I assume) meant to be a synonym for 'work' in the 5 April, 1994, NBEET press release 'Schools should improve links with the labour market' which states: 'the (Schools) Council proposes that schools should provide more structured links to the labour market for their senior secondary students, including the provision of Australian Vocational Certificate Levels 1 and 2'.

If they really do mean 'labour market' then the NBEET statement presents schools with huge problems. Schools should note that, because of the high level of unemployment (37%) of unemployed 15-24 year-olds who have Year 12 (or the highest level of secondary school available) there is already a graphic display of the harsh realities of the 'labour market' in action.

The problem is that there is every indication that the 'market' cannot absorb the labour which is presently available in both England's and Australia's 'labour markets'. This will only be possible in countries like England and Australia if (for example) new technologies are developed, existing technologies improved, or new ways are found to combine technologies, and these three require a high standard of general education, according to Manchester University's Professor Alan Smithers and others who are concerned about the lowering of educational standards by vocational education and training policymakers and administrators.

So changes to education and training are frequently just ways of trying to cope with the short-term unemployment problem. They do not get down to what many regard as the basic issue, which is a poor standard of general education, especially when England is compared to its European competitors.

One final aspect of the 'market' needs to be mentioned. The 'market' approach represents (to its keenest protagonists) voluntarism and the removal of government intervention. Yet if training is to assume the importance it deserves, government intervention *is* essential. That intervention is generally vociferously opposed (note the reaction to Australia's training guarantee).

Brendon Evans in his book *The Politics of the Training Market* puts his reservations this way for England: 'Unfavourable international comparisons, short-termism, a lack of adequate legislation and reliance on market forces reveal much of what is deficient about British training. It remains an open question whether the move towards a training market will address the problem' (p.190).

Major differences

The general background, then, for both countries is of a 15-19 year old population which has been declining numerically; of employment shifts from agriculture and industry to services; of a heavy emphasis on the 'market', but especially in England; and of governments which have a strong belief in the importance of training as a way of improving the supply side of the economy. None of this is surprising but it does serve to underline the countries' similarities.

However, there are two major differences of a general nature between Australia and England. First, England is a member of the European Union (EU). Since 1992 there has been a single market and that is having a profound impact on England. Of interest to this report are:

- the training of business people so that they are better able to compete within the larger market
- the training of people from other EU countries who want to live in England
- EU funding for research (and interestingly, the NCVER received an EU grant last year)
- the changing of vocational education courses so that they have greater relevance to the wider market.

This last point has special relevance to Australia (although as an aim it is barely credible in England, given the state of the NVQs). For example, Australia claims to be a part of the Asia/Pacific region, but how many of our vocational education courses take account of this, (a) in terms of core Asian Studies (including languages) as a part of general vocational education (b) in terms of

equipping trainees with skills marketable throughout the region, and (c) in terms of offering vocational qualifications which have a currency within the region? All three are highly relevant to our export needs.

The second major difference concerns the structures of vocational education and training. Whereas the boundaries between 'training' and 'vocational education' have become blurred in Australia (and many would argue that there should be no distinction), in England they are the responsibilities of two different ministers. Training is part of employment; vocational education is part of education. This has caused some interesting tensions with employment coming out on top. This will be developed later.

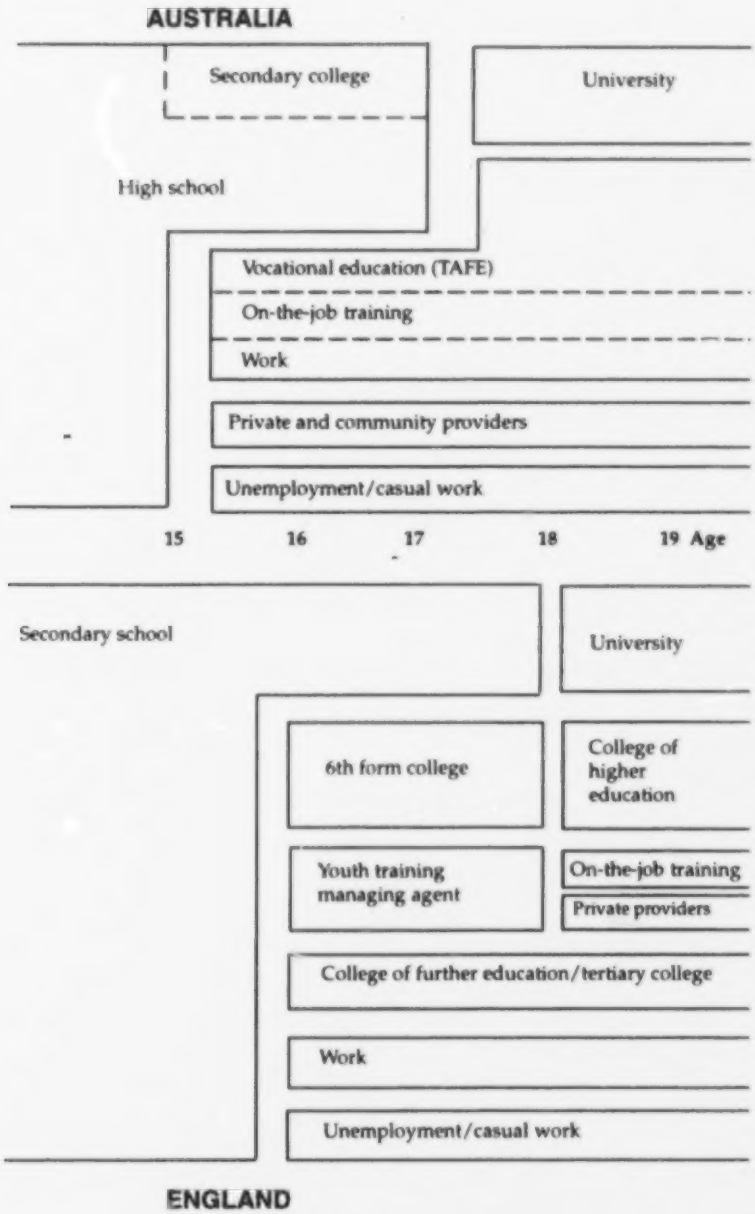
Educating 15-19 year olds

England has one central government. There are 109 education authorities with many responsibilities similar to those of the eight Australian States/Territories. There was considerable political tension between the Thatcher government and the English education authorities, because the Prime Minister believed that there was too little central control of education. This led to the setting up of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) which enabled the central government to have a major impact on school curricula by allocating grants centrally. This reason for creating TVEI seems to have been forgotten in the descriptive accounts of that project. The national/local tensions have been of great significance in England and have helped to shape educational policy. That policy has included the introduction of national curricula, starting of national testing, and the approach to funding of vocational education.

The Department for Education has responsibility for national policy and standards for education in England and also funds further and higher education. Schools are administered by the (local) education authorities, with the provision for schools to be able to opt out and receive direct funding. The broad structures of 15-19 year old education in England and Australia are shown in Figure 5.

Australia has generally followed the Scottish, rather than the English, approach to general education. Schools have always been comprehensive in Scotland and universities have never offered a three years honours degree (as they still do in England). Primary school education ends at the end of Year 6 in England and Year 7 in Scotland; in Australia the year of transition depends on the State/Territory, some being Year 6 and some Year 7.

Figure 5: Broad structures of 15-19 year old education
(Note: the progression is not linear. For example, in Australia it is possible to transfer from high school to any post-17 area.)



Turning specifically to 15-19 year olds, compulsory education continues to 16 years of age in England (as is the law in Tasmania, but not the practice). In both countries there is an increasing trend for students to continue to the final year of schooling. The 1992 retention rate for Australia was 73.8% (government schools) and

84.7% (non-government schools), giving a rate for all schools of 77.1%. For UK the figure was 71%. The main progression breaks in 15-19 year old education in Australia are at 15 and 17 years of age; in England they are at 16 and 18 years of age. Secondary education has tended to be more highly specialised in England than in Australia, although recent attempts have been made to change this, especially with the introduction of General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and the earlier TVEI.

One of the major differences between England and Australia is what I have often described as 'examinations-driven' versus 'curriculum-driven' education. England has been examinations-driven, with little external influence on the curriculum; whereas Australia has been curriculum-driven. England's national curriculum has started to change that influence.

Not shown in Figure 5 are England's City Technology Colleges. These have not been successful and no more will be opened. They were the Thatcher Government's attempt to get industry to fund school vocational education. The big mistake was that they grew out of schools, not out of training and, as a consequence, have not been oriented towards industry's requirements.

The only part of Figure 5 requiring further explanation is the college of further education/tertiary college box for England. This covers:

- further education colleges, sometimes joint higher education;
- tertiary colleges, which provide the entire range of education for 16-19 year olds in their region. There are about 60 tertiary colleges;
- sixth form colleges, which offer full-time 17-18 year old students (mostly) academic courses. There are 116 sixth form colleges;
- specialist further education colleges, such as those in agriculture or performing arts. There are 48 of these;
- institutions catering for adult education.

The over 350 English Colleges of Further Education are similar to Australia's vocational education (TAFE) colleges. Australia has nothing exactly the same as England's youth training managing agents, which are funded by the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and do include Colleges of Further Education. Our private training providers would be the closest.

The tertiary colleges are judged to be a great success, recognising that a traditional school environment is not what many 16-19 year olds want. They are helping to break down the vocational/

academic barrier. The distinction between tertiary colleges and further education colleges, in some regions, is blurred.

About 25 years ago England raised the school leaving age from 15 to 16 years. Presently, Australia is relying on the Finn Report target for increased participation—that almost all 19 year olds should have completed the equivalent of Year 12 by the year 2001. However, those students most at risk will usually be the ones who continue to leave school at age 15 years. Given that the basis for work and for training (as well as for entry to tertiary education) must be a good general education, it seems curious that Australia does not give serious consideration to raising the school leaving age, thus benefiting those who are presently most at risk. Many would point out that a large proportion of those who do complete Year 12 remain unemployed. The argument assumes that the school curriculum will remain unchanged.

Secondary education in both countries has been driven by the demands of universities. About one-quarter of students in England go on to higher education.

Professor Smithers in his report points out that English school students perform only half as well as those in Germany and France in basic school subjects such as mathematics and science. There are concerns in both England and Australia about core competencies such as these and attempts are being made to deal with the concerns.

Key competencies

Both countries have identified 'key areas of competence' (Australia) or 'core skills' (England). They are almost identical, but with one important difference as is shown in Figure 6. That important difference is reinforced by comments made earlier in this chapter.

Figure 6: Core skills

AUSTRALIA	ENGLAND
Language and communication	Communication
Scientific and technological understanding	Information technology
Problem solving	Problem solving
Mathematics	Numeracy
Cultural understanding	(See 'themes' below)
Personal and interpersonal	Personal skills
—	Modern language competence

Communication, problem solving and personal skills have been designated in England as the three fundamental core skills. The National Curriculum Council has also stated that there are three

important themes which should be used in order to develop the core skills. These themes are:

- aesthetic and creative
- scientific and technological
- social and economic.

In England it is the intention to include the core skills in every kind of 14-19 year olds educational programme, so that vocational qualifications will also have currency for university entrance and so that school students will not be forced to choose between an academic or a vocational route at too early an age.

The intention behind key competencies in both countries is to strengthen some aspects of general education at the secondary level. The World Bank has stated, in its strategic plan for technical and vocational education, that its main efforts will now be to strengthen general education. This is because a good base of general education is also regarded as a good foundation for vocational education and training. (I'm not sure that this is fully understood by some in Australia who would seek to narrow the school curriculum.)

In England, the three fundamental core skills are likely to become the only ones that matter because of their higher status. Even these are not tested separately in NVQs and GNVQs, which must indicate a serious lack of commitment to core skills by vocational education policy-makers. (They are, of course, tested in schools.)

One important set of vocational education course aims which seem to be forgotten in both countries when core competencies are being developed, and when outcomes-based assessment is the only assessment, is the development of trainee attitudes or values. Vocational education and training must be more than the learning and reproduction of narrow skills because, as was emphasised earlier, we are dealing with people. Attitude development is an important part of their learning and will encompass such things as pride in one's work, commitment to occupational health and safety, and honesty.

If appropriate positive attitude development is not built into a course, that does not mean that attitudes will not be developed. They will, and some will be negative. In other words, attitude development (favourable or unfavourable) will occur, regardless of what planners may say.

The Australian key areas of competence did include 'personal and interpersonal' competence with examples, of which 'adaptability to change', 'self-esteem' and 'ethics' were three. England has 'personal' skills in its list of core skills. All of these are associated with the content (or process) of the curriculum. In its seminar 'Values in Further Education' the Further Education Unit went further, stating that values may be classified as:

- values underpinning the operation, leadership.management and strategic direction of the institution/college;
- values underpinning the vocational education system as a whole, expressed, for example, through qualification systems and funding mechanisms; as well as
- values expressed in the content and process of the curriculum.

There is a need within Australia for debate on values within vocational education and training.

Politics

Not surprisingly, much political activity in England has been about the control of training. Firstly, there has been the tension between the Department for Education and the Employment Department. Secondly, there has been the tension between industry and the educationalists. Thirdly, there has been the tension between central government and local government. (A fourth tension between the four countries that comprise the United Kingdom need not concern us.) All recent changes to vocational education and training in England should be seen as a consequence of the dominance of the Employment Department and its desire to reduce unemployment. The Department believes that industry (the 'client') should lead change within a framework of centralised decision-making. These changes are best effected at the local level, with 'market forces' prevailing. 'Accountability' 'performance criteria' and 'outcomes' are all seen as important. Everything must be quantified.

The over-riding broad political push, however, has been towards the semi-privatisation of government bodies and the removal of trade union influence. The creation of Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) achieved the former and the scrapping of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) achieving the latter. In creating TECs, the government has confirmed the dominance of the Employment Department, has attempted to switch the emphasis from central to local control, has pretended that TECs are businesses (rather than civil service bodies) and has maintained the high profile of training, one of whose major aims is to reduce the high level of unemployment.

A late-comer to the training political scene is the Department of Trade & Industry (DTI). It believes education is the key to competition, and will probably end up by banging together the other two departments' 'heads'.

Many of the recently introduced changes to training and vocational education are simple to understand in principle. Some have been introduced following the policy determinations by the Conservative right-wing. The changes, however, have become complicated because of their translation by the (allegedly) left-wing of the Department for Education. And so a further tension has developed between some politicians and the educational bureaucracies.

Persistently in England I asked the question: 'Would you prefer to have a single department responsible for both vocational education and training?'. The best reason I was given for not having a single department was that such a mammoth department creates a monopoly, and monopoly is bad. Although sometimes tedious, tension can be creative.

The one person who would definitely prefer a single (English) department thought that the rivalry of two separate departments tended to produce waste, as separate empires were created, neither of which would fully co-operate with the other. Two others would prefer a single department, if it were possible to start from scratch. However, they are realists and know this is impossible, so are resigned to the two departments 'the one being the hair shirt of the other'.

In Australia, the creation of the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training was a powerful political message. Even the order of the words in the name was regarded as important by some. However, although such a judgement can only be highly subjective, my view is that keeping employment (as 'client') separate from education (as 'provider') in England, and with employment being the client for up to 25% of the further education colleges' funding, has been an even more powerful political message, not least of all within the colleges themselves. It is certainly having very major consequences. 15-19 year olds are directly affected in the following ways:

- delivery of post-school vocational education and training programmes funded by the Employment Department which are influencing vocational education;
- school courses where development has been both directly and indirectly influenced by the Employment Department, with some direct funding;
- school career counselling by staff, employed by the Employment Department, who do not judge success by university entrance.

Translating this to Australia, we would have DEET split into two separate departments, one being responsible for employment and training, the other being responsible for all levels of education, including vocational education. The AVC would (for example) be funded by the Employment Department, thereby directly influencing schools, as well as colleges, private providers and workplace training. Vocational colleges (TAFE) would get their 'core funding' from the Education Department but their 'training funding' would be obtained (competitively) from the Employment Department.

Of course, what works in one country (and some would argue is a consequence of the two cultures—science and humanities) may not work in another; and the above is merely a translation of what happens in England to what could happen in Australia.

2 Vocational education for 15-19 year olds

In this chapter I shall make some introductory comparisons between the two countries; Australia will then be covered very briefly, merely emphasising a few issues which I consider important, but with no description of what the Australian reader already knows; then I turn to the four pillars of English vocational education and training development, one of which is funding. The other three are TVEI, TECs and NVQs.

Some comparisons

Vocational education in both countries is highly complex. In England a very large number of bodies exist with responsibilities for some aspect of vocational education and training. Responsibilities are frequently diffuse. In Australia, the existence of the States/Territories also presents additional complexities. Nevertheless, the chart shown as Figure 7 summarises the main, broad responsibilities within each country.

Figure 7: Main vocational education and training responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITY	ENGLAND	AUSTRALIA
Policy	Employment Department and Department for Education	Ministerial Council
Funding	Further Education Funding Council and TECs	ANTA and States/Territories
Transmitting industry's training requirements	Industry Training Organisations (ITOs)	Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs)
Ensuring training delivery at the local level	Training and Enterprise Council (TECs)	State/Territory training authorities
Determining industry standards	Lead bodies (sometimes ITOs)	Industry Training Bodies
Delivery of vocational education and training	Further education colleges, managing agencies (including colleges), private trainers, employers	TAFE colleges, employers and private trainers
Qualifications	Large number of bodies which must be accredited by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications	State/Territory bodies

In general, responsibility for *vocational education* within England lies with the Department for Education, with funding being provided by the Further Education Funding Council; whereas responsibility for *training* lies with the Employment Department through Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs).

However, divisions of responsibility are not quite as clear as this, because up to 8% of colleges' vocational education budgets are also channelled through TECs with additional funding for training activities. Funding is discussed later in this chapter.

Figure 7 refers to a 'large number of bodies' offering qualifications in England. Although this is true, three bodies only offer 90% of all qualifications. These bodies are the City & Guilds (of London Institute), the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). Originally, they had particular areas of responsibility with little overlap, but that arrangement has now gone; and City & Guilds is even going to be offering GCSE in schools. It seems likely that BTEC will offer most of its awards as General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) which are described later.

Both countries have a history of (almost) constant restructuring of vocational education. Every change of government, every change of minister, usually leads to structural changes. This has meant that the development of systems has (until recently) been particularly neglected in England, a country which has poured a lot of money into trialling new approaches only to abandon them after fairly short periods. As a number of those interviewed remarked : 'We have a history of pulling up new plants and letting them wither'. The intense restructuring activity over the past decade within Australia has given the impression of change but often without the substance. In both countries great care must be taken to ensure that increased resources for training do not, in fact, strengthen that which needs to be changed. The colourful term for this (used by Professor Bennet of the London School of Economics) is the 'perverse policy syndrome', whereby all that increased resources for more training actually do is to strengthen inappropriate practices and further increase the bureaucratic administrative load.

For the first time, England has a national system of training and a national system of vocational education with some integration of both systems. That integration is especially noticeable for 15-19 year olds. There is an attempt to make delivery decisions where they should be made : at the local level. A strong client orientation is emerging (albeit reluctantly in some colleges of further education). Similarly, for the first time, Australia has an embryo national vocational education and training system, which can learn much from the English experiences, including England's mistakes.

Now let's turn to some of the main features of these systems which have special relevance to 16-19 year olds. (The Australian section will not repeat what is already common knowledge.)

Australia

It is important to distinguish between the challenges being faced, ways in which those challenges are being met, and the attempts to develop a national system. These three are now discussed, insofar as they affect 15-19 year olds.

The challenges being faced include:

- the mixture of process and product components which comprise what is labelled 'training reform agenda';
- an increase in the proportion of 16-19 year olds receiving formal education and training;
- making delivery more appropriate.

The training reform agenda has dominated vocational education and training in Australia. The agenda consists of a mixture of components but with an emphasis on outcomes. This is not the place to discuss the training reform agenda in detail, although three matters relevant to this report will be raised.

First, as one Australian senior training manager has pointed out, industry reform and training reform have become intermeshed. (Another commentator has claimed that there is a complete separation between training and industrial relations. That may have been true, but is no longer the case.) Certainly, award restructuring does depend upon training reform; but training reform does not depend (and should not depend) on award restructuring. However, the two have become interdependent, thus making training reform far more difficult. This is starting to impact on the Australian Vocational Certificate (which is mentioned below). Interestingly, this has not been a problem in England.

Second, one of the biggest (but often unrecognised) challenges facing Australia is to find ways of turning the large quantity of informal and non-formal training into formal training, so that work-based training (for example) has currency within vocational training colleges, and so that adult education gets the recognition it deserves through what has become known as the 'recognition of prior learning'.

It is likely that a large amount of training is taking place outside formal vocational education institutions, but it is just not being recognised and so does not lead anywhere. There needs to be a shift to formal training, so that recognition is given. The Australian Vocational Certificate could help to bring about the shift.

In England, the approach to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) has meant that much more formal training has occurred and is occurring in the workplace. The biggest, single, and desperately urgent need in Australia is to develop a framework and a system of national vocational qualifications. This should then help the shift to formal training.

The third matter concerns schools. In Australia they have been barely touched by the training reform agenda, whereas they have been changed (and are still changing) in highly significant ways in England. The Curriculum Corporation's April, 1994, report - *Vocational Education in Australian Schools* reinforces this statement. However, there must be sympathy for schools when there is no national accreditation framework and when some of the curriculum on offer is not suitable for schools.

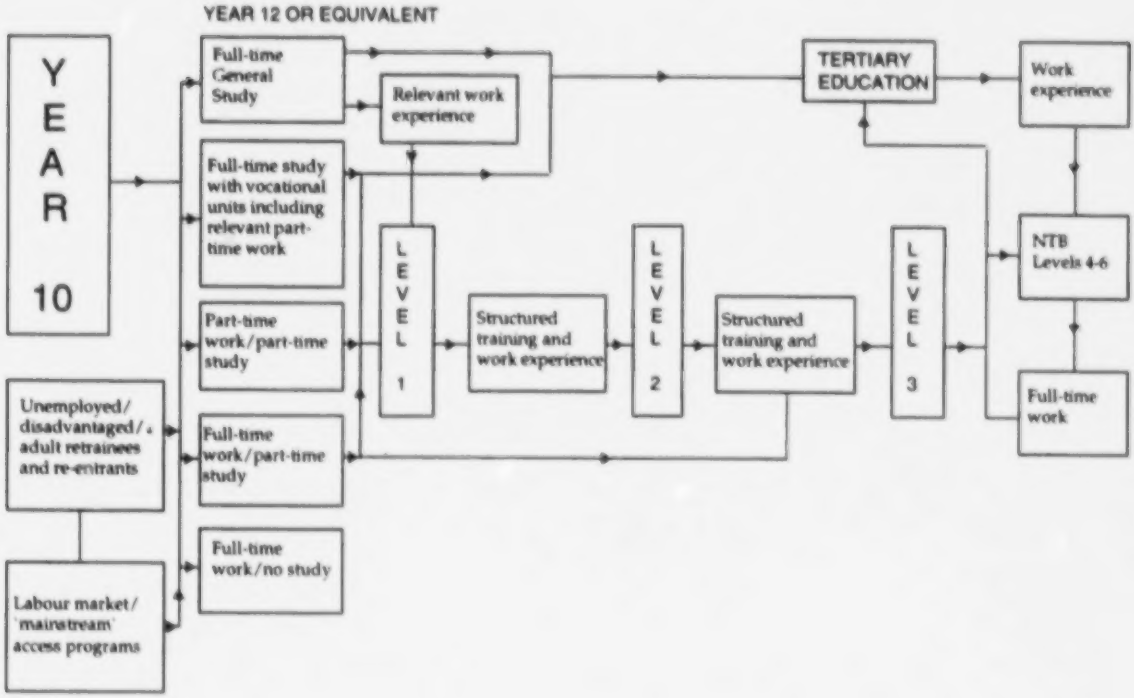
The challenges faced by Australia are being met by vocational education in ways which include:

- separating policy determination and funding from delivery
- the Australian Standards Framework (ASF)
- changing vocational education so that it is employment-driven
- making structural changes to training, but of special relevance to this report is the introduction of the Australian Vocational Certificate
- introducing a unified system of training profiles.

The main vehicles for the development of a national system of vocational education and training are the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training, the Australian National Training Authority, the National Training Board and the State/Territory training authorities (whose co-operation is essential). However, as stated above, in all of this the schools remain virtually untouched, whereas in England the impact on schools has been considerable.

Now lets turn specifically to 15-19 year olds. One of the most important decisions ever affecting this group was taken in this country on the introduction of the Australian Vocational Certificate (AVC). Apprenticeships and traineeships are merged; schools, vocational education (TAFE) colleges, private providers and employers are brought together. A summary of the AVC plan is shown in Figure 8, which is taken straight from the ESFC publication *The Australian Vocational Certificate Training System.*

Figure 8: The Australian vocational educational certificate training system



The AVC structure is very similar to the lower levels of the English National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) structure, but with one very important difference : NVQs may also be used to gain university entrance (as were the old ordinary national diplomas). This immediately means that NVQs need not (in principle) suffer from the 'second best' prejudice. (In practice, they still must overcome this problem.) As an aside I would urge that AVCs must not drop the nationally known term 'apprentice', a decision regretted in England and recently reversed. The marketing problems which have been caused by the attempts to drop 'TAFE' will be repeated if the term 'apprentice' is scrapped.

Of particular concern about the training reform agenda in general, and the AVCs in particular, is the belief that competency-based training is essential to their success. The English GNVQs are not competency-based, and that is not regarded as a special problem.

To put it bluntly : Australia has made competency-based training the 'main game'. It is really a 'side-show' (albeit important) and should not be allowed to detract from the really important issues. This is picked up later.

England

Vocational education and training changes in England have depended upon four main thrusts:

- the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) which has now been completed;
- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs);
- Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs);
- a new approach to funding.

The policy agenda behind these have been driven by the Department for Education, the Employment Department and the Further Education Funding Council. The most significant recent White Paper has been *Education and Training for the 21st Century* (published in mid-1991) which asserted that the government would:

- establish a framework of vocational qualifications that are widely recognised and used, and that are relevant to the needs of the economy;
- promote equal esteem for academic and vocational qualifications, and clearer and more accessible paths between them;
- extend the range of services offered by school sixth forms and colleges, so that young people face fewer restrictions about what education or training they choose and where they take it up;
- give training and enterprise councils more scope to promote employer influence in education, and mutual support between employers and education;
- stimulate more young people to train, through the offer of a training credit;
- promote links between schools and employers, to ensure that pupils gain a good understanding of the world of work before they leave school;
- ensure that all young people get better information and guidance about the choices available to them at 16 and as they progress through further education and training;
- provide opportunities and incentives for young people to reach higher levels of attainment;
- give colleges more freedom to expand their provision and respond more flexibly to the demands of their customers.

This document ended the political debate and saw the government move into policy implementation.

The 1980s political battle was between education and employment. Employment won and so changes to vocational education and training have reflected that win.

The rest of this chapter of the report will now describe and discuss the TVEI, NVQs, TECs (briefly) and the funding of vocational education and training. TECs will then be treated in detail in the next chapter, which deals with delivery at the local level.

Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI)

TVEI funded a large number of curriculum projects across the whole school and college curricula. It has already been mentioned that the main motive for the TVEI was political rather than educational. (Mrs Thatcher was fed up with the Department of Education and Science.) Nevertheless, the educational outcomes have been important, even if they are not quantifiable. The main educational aim of TVEI was to make the 14-18 year old curricula more relevant to the economy and the world of work. The main claimed achievements, since it started as a pilot in 1983, have been:

- to cover the whole of England
- to influence school and college curricula in major ways
- to make learning across all (relevant) subjects more problem-solving, more investigative
- to introduce new technology to schools and colleges
- to improve skills in science, technology, information technology and modern languages (once again, note the last of these)
- to form business/education partnerships, including the use by employers of schools' and colleges' expertise
- to provide compulsory work experience
- to ensure appropriate counselling for young people
- to get industry directly involved in curriculum planning
- to pave the way for the National Curriculum.

There has never been a TVEI 'subject', as such; rather, the attempt has been made to change the existing school and college 'subjects'. The project was funded by the Employment Department, initially through the (now defunct) Manpower and Services Commission (MSC). It accounted for 1-2% of the total budget for schools and colleges.

Critics of TVEI point out that it was never tied to qualifications and that many head teachers merely reshaped existing curricula to collect the money. Certainly, the strategy was never carefully thought out and the MSC was just handed the task and told to

make things work. Ironically, the last of the above claimed achievements is also the biggest threat to TVEI, because TVEI does not fit readily into the National Curriculum! (The National Curriculum is driven by the Department for Education, whereas TVEI was driven by the Employment Department.)

However, the introduction of General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) may help to continue the TVEI influence within schools.

Australia has never had a project like the TVEI. Its management (based on individual contracts between an educational institution and the central funding agency) was quite revolutionary to England. For the first time it ensured central government control over some aspects of local delivery of curricula.

TVEI is now finished, but its aims still matter to the Employment Department and form an important part of their quality performance.

One example only will be given of the way the TVEI in one school (Longcroft School, Beverley) has influenced the curriculum. The school received TVEI funding for one member of staff to co-ordinate school/work interface activities. This was so successful that the school has made it a permanent position, with responsibilities that include education/business promotions, links with community bodies, careers provision, Saturday school, as well as school/work interface. This position would not have been created but for the initial introduction of TVEI.

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)

Whereas the 1980s debate was about the curriculum, the 1990s debate (and most certainly the political debate) is about assessment. Central to the improvement of vocational education and training has been the introduction of National Vocational Qualifications. NVQs are about 'outcomes' and are not intended to be about 'learning'. Their assessment is competency-based. The main groups involved in their development are shown below in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Development of standards and qualifications

GROUP	MAIN ROLE
Employment Department	Strategic guidance. Financial help.
Lead bodies (often Industry Training Organisations, ITOs).	Identification of standards of competence and associated qualifications.
National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ)	Quality assurance. Assign qualification to a level in NVQ framework. Approve examining bodies.
Examining bodies	Assessment and award of qualifications.

There are now three, overlapping, post-16 years pathways. *Occupational qualifications* are the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) which are based on statements of occupational competence. These are regarded as especially suitable for those wishing to progress to or within employment. (However, there are indications that NVQs are mainly being used to upgrade employee skills.) *Vocational qualifications* are the General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), based on statements of vocational achievement, and which are regarded as especially suitable for those wanting to progress either to employment or to higher education. They have been dubbed 'vocational A Levels'. *Academic qualifications* are the (traditional) G.C.E. 'A' Levels (two years' study) and the 'AS' Levels (one year's study). These are designed for progression to higher education, although 'AS' Levels have never really caught on. However, it is claimed that all three qualifications are suitable for all three kinds of destination (higher education, employment, vocational education), but this has yet to be verified.

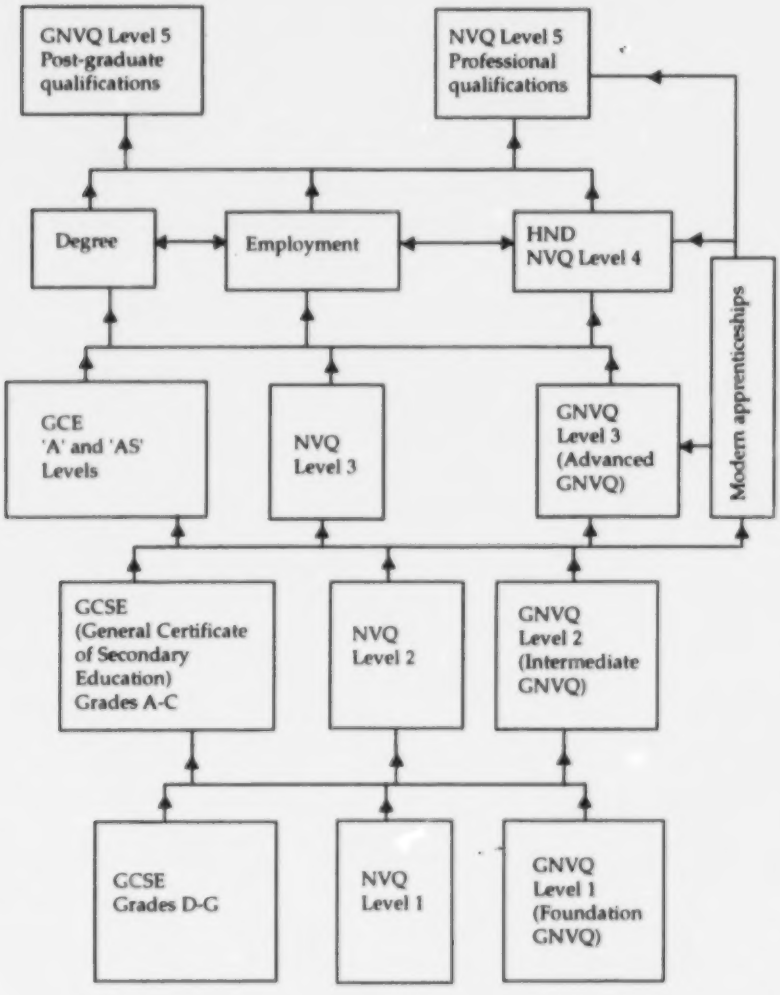
Summarising the above in flow chart form, we have the assessment and progression possibilities shown in Figure 10. Modern apprenticeships have been included. They will mostly be at NVQ 3 Level but may extend to NVQ 4.

A major concern must be that there will be no lateral movement in the program. Therefore, it is extremely important that universities should accept GNVQs. If they do not, such a progression framework will be seen for what it is—linear.

The Further Education Unit (FEU) has been promoting a post-16 credit accumulation and transfer framework. (By credit they mean 'currency of the system'.) They point out that a credit system has been established in the USA, there is a provisional framework in the European community, and an emergent framework in New Zealand. (FEU publications listed in the documents collected provide a good coverage of this issue.)

Note that Figure 10 just shows *progression* and not 'equivalence'. For example, the HND is a two year qualification, whereas a degree is three years. Also, it should be noted that many other qualifications also exist, apart from those in the framework.

Figure 10: English qualification progression possibilities



About one-third of young people, take 'A' Levels as their main qualification. One-tenth of young people take 'AS' Levels (which have half of the content of 'A' Levels). The intention is that about one-half of 16/17 year olds should take GNVQs. About one in twenty young people and adults take NVQs. More than 600 NVQs are available.

NVQs were introduced so that there would be clear, nationally-recognised vocational qualifications. *Education for the 21st Century* listed their assumed benefits:

- based on up-to-date standards, set by employers, which define the knowledge and skills that people need in the workplace;
- a guarantee of competence to do the job, not just in theory but in practice, and of the skills that are needed for modern work;
- recognised throughout the United Kingdom;

- in a framework of levels, which allows people to plan their career paths and to see a clear ladder of progress to higher qualifications;

- modular, so that skills and knowledge, common to many jobs, can be recognised, however they have been acquired; and so that people can build up qualifications as they progress and transfer skills from job to job;

- free of artificial requirements about the pace, place or method of learning;

- for all ages, from school right through to the end of a career. (p.16)

The National Council for Vocational Qualifications was formed in 1986. It was given nine main tasks and these are listed in the NVQ Implementation Guide published by the Humberside TEC:

1 Secure standards of occupational competence and ensure that vocational qualifications are based on them.

2 Design and implement a new national framework for vocational qualifications.

3 Approve bodies making or accrediting awards.

4 Obtain comprehensive coverage of all occupational sectors.

5 Secure arrangements for quality assurance.

6 Set up effective liaison with bodies awarding vocational qualifications.

7 Establish a national database for vocational qualifications.

8 Undertake, or arrange to be undertaken, research and development to discharge these functions.

9 Promote vocational education, training and qualifications. (p.2)

It is important to note that the NVQ framework is a five level *qualifications* framework, whereas in Australia we have eight levels of competency which comprise the Australian Standards Framework (ASF) and which (presently) are not directly linked to qualifications at every level. Given the impossibility of having competency-based training without competency-based assessment, doubts must be expressed about divorcing the ASF from qualifications in this way.

There are signs that NVQs are mostly being used to upgrade workers' skills. About 5% of total further education college enrolments are NVQs (representing about 10% of all vocational education enrolments) but they are almost entirely restricted to a small number of areas such as hairdressing, business studies, catering and construction crafts. These are areas which can readily simulate working conditions, which are essential if colleges are to justify the offering of what are supposed to be work-based courses.

Presently there is a struggle between the Employment Department and Department for Education. The former would like to see an NVQ for teacher training, whereas the latter is not keen on the idea.

General NVQs are a new alternative to the academic 'A' Levels (described by some as the 'gold standard'). They are intended to be a preparation for work as well as for further study. They are known as 'vocational 'A' levels', and there is every indication that they are going to be extremely popular. Of special interest is : who should define standards for GNVQs? Employer-led bodies did this for NVQs.

There was widespread agreement that GNVQs were an important development. They may be offered by both further education colleges and by schools. Since September, 1993, the following subjects have been available at the GNVQ advanced and intermediate levels:

- art and design
- business
- health and social care
- leisure and tourism
- manufacturing.

From September, 1994, three more subjects will be available (together with foundation GNVQs in all existing subjects):

- built environment
- hospitality and catering
- science.

Interestingly, GNVQs are the responsibility of the Department for Education, not the Employment Department. Work experience does not form a part of GNVQs. Partly because of this, they do have a few critics, one of whom has described them as a 'cop-out', saying that they are vocational subjects treated in a fairly academic way. It was also said that their main purpose is to help cope with unemployment. However, the chief criticisms of both GNVQs and NVQs have come from the Centre for Education and Employment Research (CEER) at the University of Manchester, which has stated that some of the changes introduced by the NCVQ threaten a 'disaster of epic proportions'. Because of the importance of their research findings, their report is discussed below, together with the outcomes of discussions held with them and other researchers.

The National Curriculum and GNVQs

The English National Curriculum for schools and its assessment were recently evaluated by Sir Ron Dearing. His final report was published last December. It would be inappropriate to discuss the National Curriculum or National Assessment at length because only the final Key Stage 4 is directly relevant to my report. The Key Stages are:

Key Stage 1 – pupils aged 5-7
Key Stage 2 – pupils aged 7-11
Key Stage 3 – pupils aged 11-14
Key Stage 4 – students aged 14-16.

National assessment has taken place at the end of each key stage.

A major decision regarding vocational education was made for Key Stage 4. The General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) are going to be extended down to age 14, so that work undertaken as part of a General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) course may count towards GNVQ accreditation.

One slogan I picked up was 'opting out is staying in', meaning that students are continuing in full-time education because there is nothing else to do. It is especially important, then, that the 14-19 year old curricula should be seen as a continuum for all students, not just for those who are planning to proceed to university. Dearing's report points out that there will be anxiety over how much of the pre-16 curriculum should be vocational, but then goes on to say that 'France, Germany, and the Netherlands already provide this kind of educational experience for a substantial percentage of young people' (p.49). (I did not come across anxiety, only mostly positive remarks about the concept of GNVQs.)

What is likely to happen is that the Foundation and Intermediate GNVQs (see Figure 10) will be extended down to age 14, to produce a new vocational qualification at age 16. This would then allow for the following options:

- a new GNVQ occupying about one-fifth of curriculum time, combined with GCSE qualifications;
- current GNVQ units extended over the 14-19 age range;
- full GNVQ occupying about 40% of curriculum time.

What is being planned is an important breakthrough. It will have a very major impact on the post-14 year old curriculum (about one-half of all students are expected to choose the vocational alternative); and it recognises that the 14-19 year old curricula should be treated as a progressive whole. Australia can learn from this important change in direction for schools.

Criticisms of National Vocational Qualifications

Alan Smithers and his Manchester University team claim that 'the root of the problem is that in seeking to develop an education which is distinctively practical, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications has departed from established educational practice'. Many, of course, would regard that departure as a distinct advantage, rather than a disadvantage! However, their report *All Our Futures: Britain's Education Revolution* (which was featured in a one-hour programme on prime-time commercial television) went on to expand this claim, providing the following reservations:

- schematic framework derived from behavioural psychology ruthlessly applied
- unfamiliar jargon not readily understood by students, teachers or employers
- no syllabus
- no specified courses or time limit
- student-centred learning
- no compulsory written exams for NVQs
- underpinning knowledge and theory not separately tested but inferred
- one-to-one continuous assessment when candidate deemed ready
- bureaucratic procedures
- all existing vocational qualifications to be replaced including BTEC 'Nationals' and City & Guilds craft certificate (p.9)

The report also expressed concerns about a lack of public understanding of vocational qualifications. This kind of criticism is easily dealt with, but a more fundamental criticism is not : the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) is accused of exceeding its remit and imposing its own philosophy on qualifications (rather than just categorising the qualifications).

Because colleges (and private providers) are now partly funded on outcomes, they have a financial incentive to pass students! One horror story printed in correspondence to the *Observer* newspaper (3/4/94) follows:

> 'I am pleased you highlighted the fraud in National Vocational Qualification exams (last week). The same criticism applies to all seen exams, including City & Guilds, with preset multiple choice questions.
>
> I have worked at several private training organisations teaching RSA and City & Guilds office

> subjects. Tutors were under tremendous pressure to pass students quickly, and our efficiency was measured by this. When they passed we could place them with an employer, get an income from that employer and get another 'bum on a seat'.
>
> This approach meant we only taught the barest minimum of the syllabus and made sure everyone passed, because they answered the exam questions in some slightly disguised form in practice papers.
>
> We had no funds for remedial education but rarely turned anyone away. One girl with 'special needs', who could only have found employment in a sheltered environment, passed seven city & Guilds exams. Semi-literate students gained RSA certificates because we corrected their work until they got it right.
>
> Initially, our time was also taken up with incredibly daft paperwork, making students fill in the obligatory NVQ progress sheets, with every task broken down in minute detail.
>
> (Louisa Street, Manchester)

At the heart of the Manchester University (Centre for Education and Employment Research) concern, as well as the concerns of many others, is the way the NVQs and the GNVQs are assessed. These critics are concerned about a decline in 'quality' and 'standards'. They are concerned that theoretical underpinning is now missing from vocational courses. This is because, NVQs are entirely outcomes-driven with (alleged) highly simplistic approaches to assessment. Knowledge and understanding are 'assumed' if outcomes are assessed positively. Although there are some written tests, they do not form part of the final assessment. These critics (as in Australia) claim that the learning and assessment 'whole' is bigger than the sum of the very, many parts; a fact yet to be acknowledged by many competency-based assessment proponents. As Professor Smithers said : 'We are chasing the mirage of precision'.

Defenders of NVQs insist that people are interpreting standards too narrowly and that traditional approaches to assessing knowledge and understanding may be quite inappropriate for NVQs. This does not mean that they are not assessed.

Any discussion about training or vocational education in Australia inevitably leads to a discussion about competency-based training and assessment. This is partly because many of those responsible for the policy behind the current reforms to training have made it clear that the reforms themselves include a complete change to assessment, with a switch to competency outcomes. What we have, therefore, is typical of what happens when change decisions are

taken in this country—a swing of the pendulum from one extreme to the other extreme. To mix metaphors : we never have shades of grey, always either black or white.

Change to vocational education and training was (and still is) essential. Competency standards (of the right kind) are an important part of this change. But competency-based outcomes are not the *only* outcomes. The concern about this in England was summarised by Beryl Pratley (an ex-HMI, Her Majesty's Inspector):

> 'Further education colleges, in particular, have been frantically trying to square the circle between the demands of NVQs for outcome-related assessment, and for the needs of inexperienced students for continued general education and the underlying theory that helps them make sense of working techniques and practices.'
>
> (Times Education Supplement 4/3/94)

We must not fall into this trap in Australia. We must not adopt a narrow definition of competence, so that our assessments merely cover demonstrated capacity to do a task under certain conditions. Knowledge and understanding, appropriately assessed, must form part of the assessment package.

Predictably, the Manchester University research caused a furore and a lengthy and rather poor disclaimer was issued by the NCVQ. The disclaimer mostly consisted of (alleged) detailed errors in the report (all of which were refuted), but did not get down to the basic, philosophical issues, not least of all the issue about the *value* of NVQs and GNVQs. The true answer is that it is too early to pass final judgement but there must be considerable disquiet. NVQs and GNVQs (especially) are bold ideas which can be made to work. Only time will tell if they are allowed to work and if they have the value they deserve. For this to happen, major changes to assessment will be needed.

Australia has nothing like the NVQs and GNVQs which are designed to allow movement to higher education as well as to vocational education and to employment. They are an idea well worth considering. Certainly, their acceptability in England should be monitored.

Modern apprenticeships

In terms of the official rhetoric, modern apprenticeships have been introduced primarily as 'an economic measure to improve skill supply' because 'there is a need for more people with practical technician, craft and supervisory skills'. Modern apprenticeships will be in place by September, 1995. They will be accessed using the youth credits (vouchers) which are described in the funding section of this chapter of my report.

It is expected that there will be about 150,000 Modern Apprentices at any time. Attainment will be at NVQ Level 3 (or above), including core skills. Of special interest is the statement that training content 'will not focus solely on outputs', although there is no indication of how that will be achieved.

Modern apprenticeships are intended for school leavers, with entry up to the 18th birthday. Trainee wages will be negotiated between the trainee, the employer and the TEC.

Clearly, the government regards Modern Apprenticeships as extremely important. They have had good media coverage. One Employment Department press notice started off:

> 'Employment Secretary David Hume beams up employers for a skills trek with Britain's brainforce.'

and goes on to talk about a 'quantum leap into the future'.

Nevertheless, there is nothing very new about them and Australia has nothing to learn—except that we should not abandon the term 'apprentice'. (The continuation of the term is allowed for in AVC documentation.) Also the statement that they will not just be outcomes-based should be carefully considered.

Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs)

I've already stated that Technical and Vocational Education Initiative, the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), and the TECs are three of the pillars upon which is being built the new structure for vocational education and training. (The fourth is the new approach to funding.) TECs will be described and analysed more fully in the next chapter, because it is they which are the vehicles for local delivery. This introductory section will just give a brief description. In broad terms TECs have six main aims:

- getting employers involved in the vocational curriculum
- ensuring a strategic approach to management in education and business
- helping businesses to start and to develop
- identifying and improving skills
- developing training and vocational education
- encouraging life-long learning

but with the emphasis on activity within the local areas, because TECs are regional. 'Local empowerment' was the catchcry when they were set up. In one sense, TECs were a response to alleged failure : the alleged failure of employers to see the benefits of training, and the alleged failure of vocational education and training to deliver the goods. They are funded by the Employment Department.

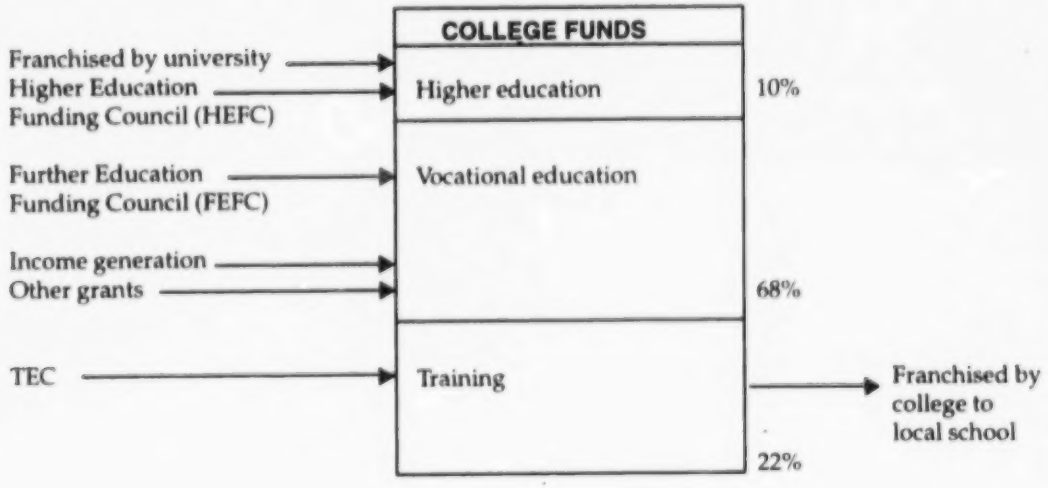
The TECs really are unique. Each TEC's role was described in the 1989 prospectus as 'to foster economic growth and contribute to the regeneration of the community it serves. Its special focus will be on strengthening the skill base and assisting local enterprise to expand and compete more effectively'.

How they have attempted to do this is described in the next chapter. That chapter also summarises an important recent evaluation of TECs by a team at the London School of Economics and described in Professor Robert Bennett's book.

Funding

The 'poll tax' forced centralised further education funding, so that there could be a balance of local and central spending. The funding of vocational education comes from the Further Education Funding Council. The funding for training comes from the Employment Department via the TECs. Flow of funds for an average college would look something like Figure 11. Obviously, there are wide variations to this breakdown, but the orders of magnitude are right.

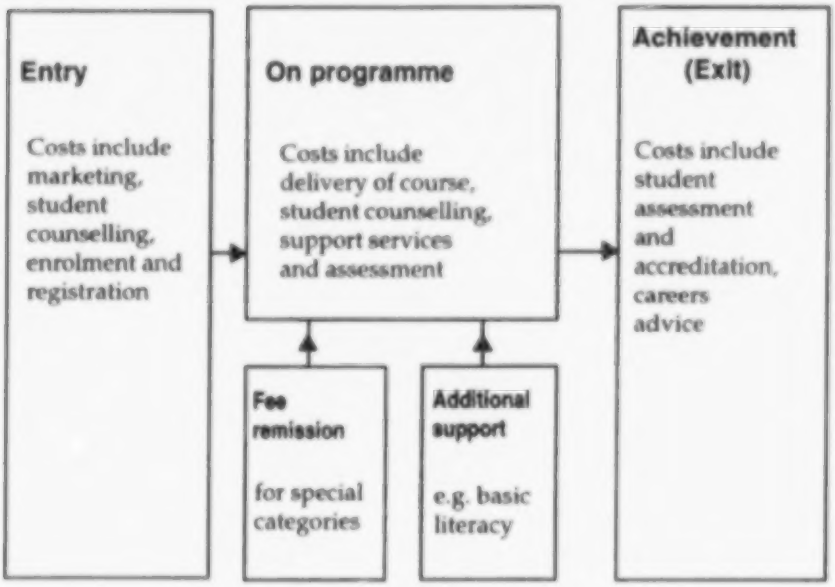
Figure 11: Flow of college funds



Higher education courses are either funded by the Higher Education Funding Council (this covers all Higher National Diplomas, HNDs) or by a university which may choose to franchise courses to a further education college. (Colleges may have agreements with a number of universities.) The college itself may franchise courses, and many schools prefer to offer GNVQs that way, rather than have to develop their own administrative procedures for applying for TEC funds direct. For the purpose of this report, I shall concentrate firstly on vocational education funding and secondly on TEC funding, ignoring higher education funding.

The recurrent funding of vocational education has recently undergone a major change, following the 1992 discussion paper *Funding Learning* and the 1994 paper *Guidance on the Recurrent Funding Methodology 1994-95*. The first paper was logical; the second (in its application of the first paper's principles) is not an easy document to understand. First, let's look at the principles, which are best summarised diagrammatically, as in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Vocational education recurrent funding


Entry
Costs include marketing, student counselling, enrolment and registration
On programme
Costs include delivery of course, student counselling, support services and assessment
Achievement (Exit)
Costs include student assessment and accreditation, careers advice
Fee remission
for special categories
Additional support
e.g. basic literacy

Funding, then, has switched from enrolments to the expenses which are involved at all stages. However, this logical approach has been translated into a highly complex system of allocating units and cost weighting factors to every course at every level. The official document is, to be polite, complicated. What it does is to introduce a new kind of 'currency'.

There are some obvious problems in such an approach. For example, why should a college's funding suffer because an employer decides to stop sending day-release students in the middle of a course?

Training funding comes through the TECs. It is wholly outcome-related funding partly based on points awarded for programme completion. (For example, a basic literacy course has one point, NVQ Level 1 has two points, NVQ Level 3 has four points.) This kind of funding has been heavily criticised because of the definition

of outcomes, which does include whether a trainee is employed after programme completion. This has created cash-flow problems in some colleges, especially if a successful trainee cannot be bothered to let the college know whether or not they are employed three months after graduating. It has been estimated that training providers may lose up to one-half of their potential claims because of the difficulties in following up output-related funding.

Here we have an example of outcome-related funding taken to extremes. The TECs themselves seem to be uncomfortable with it, but the policy is imposed upon them, so they have no alternative but to apply it rigorously (otherwise they, themselves, lose money).

The activities of the TECs and their relationship with vocational education and training providers, and with local business, are covered in the next chapter.

Two important, general, comments about both the funding for vocational education as well as the funding for training must be made. Firstly, the management information systems do not presently exist in English colleges to cope with reporting requirements. (Australia is well ahead in this regard.) Second, funding approaches have a veneer of objectivity, but are highly subjective in their quantifications of outputs and, in the case of vocational education, that subjectivity is wholly historically-based. There does not seem to have been any new, fundamental thinking, other than in the production of the vocational education funding model (Figure 13).

3 Vocational education at the local level in England

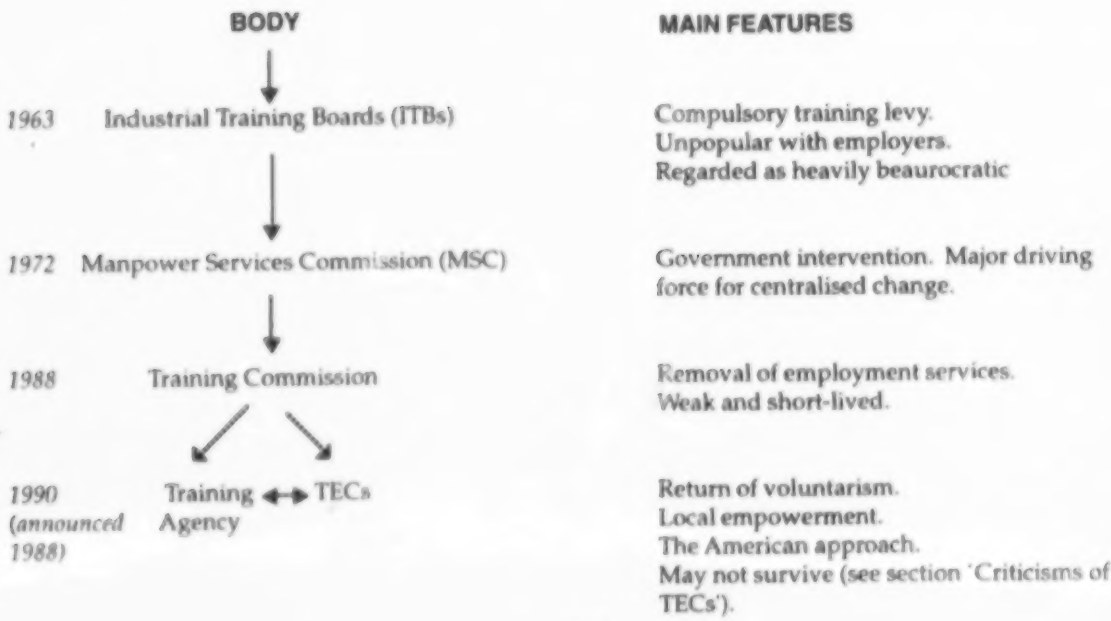
The introductory notes on TECS in the previous chapter should be read before this chapter.

This chapter has been included because of my belief that if vocational education and training are to serve their most appropriate ends, then control should be at the local level. In England, this is being attempted through the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) and in Scotland through the Local Enterprise Companies (LECs). This chapter describes the events leading up to the formation of TECs; describes the work of TECs, but especially those activities which may have relevance to Australia; considers two recent major publications on TECs, one of which is a critical report from a group at the London School of Economics (and was reported in prime-time BBC television); finally there is brief consideration of the TECs' roles in a recent (February, 1994) government report *The National Development Agenda* which deals with the development of the national vocational education and training systems (released, not surprisingly, by the Secretary of State for Employment).

Training and Enterprise Councils in detail

The main stages leading up to the formation of TECs are summarised in Figure 13.

Figure 13: From ITBs to TECs



Over the past 20 years, then, there has been a switch from non-intervention to strong central government intervention in training. Although, theoretically, the TECs were intended to be a return to voluntarism, nevertheless they were created to translate government policy locally. Nevertheless, because of their strong 'market' orientation, it can be argued that they represent a return to voluntarism (i.e. pre-1963 days).

By the start of this decade training was important to government, employers, professional bodies and trade unions—just as it became important to these groups in Australia. The scrapping of the MSC removed direct trade union involvement from England's last tripartite body.

The formation of TECs was strongly influenced by the American Private Industry Councils (PICs) which are not regarded as great successes, but the main driving force was the government's belief in the lack of commitment to training by employers and the supposed ineffectiveness of vocational education and training bodies. The Managing Director of Humberside TEC said, 'TECs were devised to solve market failings'. This statement indicates the main philosophy behind them. (Indeed, my notes of the meeting show that the one term used repeatedly in the lengthy discussion was 'market'.)

There are 104 TECs in Britain (or LECs, as they are known in Scotland—Local Enterprise Companies) which are companies limited by guarantee using private sector approaches to management, to produce local changes defined by central government. The English TECs each received an average of £18 million in the 1993/94 financial year.

The Directors of a TEC Board must be the senior executives of local organisations with business leaders comprising at least two-thirds of members. For example, the North Yorkshire TEC presently has 14 members (including the TEC CEO) and includes eight managing directors or company owners, two company chairpersons, the CEO of North Yorkshire County Council, the County Education officer and the District Secretary of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union. They meet each month and receive no payment. I am told that there is a large turnover of TEC board membership, especially of chairpersons, but have no figures to confirm this.

As well as its core money, a TEC may (and does) also compete for additional funds for special projects. The total public funds spent by TECs in 1993/94 were £2.3 billion (almost $A5 billion).

Originally it was intended that TECs themselves should not be involved directly in training, but use existing training agencies. However, about one-third of them do now train and others are contemplating it, believing it to be cheaper than hiring a contractor.

Some believe that the only way they will survive is to become heavily involved in direct training; others believe that this could lead to their demise.

The Humberside TEC is the sixth largest. Its present budget is £33 million. Eight per cent of the budget is spent on direct TEC administration. It has 130 staff plus 30 on secondment. Fifty five per cent of the staff are ex-civil servants. Their work should be seen against what have become called 'national education and training targets', which were developed by the CBI and published in 1991 as 'world class targets'. They are shown in Figure 14, with present levels of attainment also shown. They are not 'official' targets, but have been adopted by some (e.g. North York's TEC) as a set of goals.

Figure 14: National targets for TECs

DATE	TARGET	PRESENT UK LEVEL
Foundation Learning: targets for young people		
1997	80% to reach NVQ Level 2 (or equivalent)	55%
2000	50% to reach NVQ Level 3 (or equivalent	30%
Not stated	Training to produce 'self-reliance', 'flexibility', 'growth'	Not quantifiable
Lifetime learning: targets for individuals and employers		
1996	All employees being trained	20-40%, depending on definition of 'training'
1996	50% of workforce aiming for NVQs	2% (estimate)
1996	50% of medium/large organisations be Investors in People (see below)	2%
2000	50% of workforce qualified to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent	35%

In Australian terms, some of these targets are modest and attainable, whereas others could be impossible. They are also regarded as impossible in England, but the survival of the TECs will partly depend upon their achievement.

Now let's turn to what TEC's spend to achieve these targets. The expenditure break down is shown in Figure 15, which is also a fair indication of effort and influence.

Figure 15 Breakdown of TEC activity in terms of expenditure

Given their local remit, they have an extremely small amount of money for local initiative. This has led to some criticism of 'lack of local support'. Training includes the guarantee of two years training for all school leavers. By 1995, in accordance with the 'market' philosophy, all 16 and 17 year olds leaving full-time education will have a training 'credit' available to them. These 'credits' take the form of credit cards, vouchers, cheques or smart cards, and are assumed to 'give young people control and ownership of their training' (Humberside TEC leaflet). Some TECs are unhappy at their participation in training credits, but all must be involved by next year. The credits have no real cash value to trainees and seem to be regarded with bemusement.

A whole range of local training programmes is available, funded by TECs, including those for the unemployed, for women and for school teachers (to help bridge academic and vocational programmes). There has been a very heavy emphasis on the unemployed, and some have been concerned about that.

Enterprise activities (of which over 40 have been identified) include providing help in business planning, business growth, management, small business development, and giving training awards. There is nothing new in any of this activity for Australia, except for one recent development which would have some interest to us : it is

entitled 'Investors in People'. This is a national standard for in-house training, which demands the setting up and communicating of business goals, and the development of that business's employees to meet those goals. Success gains a 'kite mark of approval' which may be used in company promotion. It's a bit like a quality 'tick' for in-house training.

TECs offer free consultancy services to business who wish to participate in 'Investors in People', but charge £500 per day, plus expenses, for the assessment. (For an organisation of 100 employees, the cost would be £1000, i.e. $2,200.)

The first TECs were only set up in 1990 (formation of TECs was announced in 1988) and so assessment of their activities should bear that in mind. The most comprehensive assessment has been by Professor Robert Bennett and colleagues of the London School of Economics. A slightly earlier assessment was by Brendan Evans, Head of Politics, Huddersfield University. Their assessments and other evaluative comments made to me, are acknowledged in the following summary.

Criticisms of TECs

The TECs were formed to analyse local employment requirements, including skill requirements, to increase local training, and to improve job prospects. They were to be employer-led and employer-controlled. Professor Robert Bennett in his assessment of TECs concluded that 'the TEC/LEC mission contains a central dilemma. They are new institutions that were designed to lead and lever change. But as independent bodies their capacity to achieve change depends on working with other local institutions. TECs and LECs do not fill the whole policy space, let alone meet the full market demand for training, enterprise and business services'. (p.47)

On TEC management, Professor Bennett's judgement was that TEC Board Directors felt they were acting as quango committee members, not as company directors. In other words, they do not have true autonomy because public money is at stake. This sense was reinforced because of the high proportion of civil servants originally employed on secondment in TECs. (This last criticism is now less relevant and, for example, the North Yorkshire TEC employs 14 civil servants in a staff of 70.) There has been a large turnover of chief executives, of Board members, and there has been some publicity of allegation that a few Board members in a few TECs have helped to ensure that they got substantial training funds for their own organisations. (One example was a private coal mine, whose TEC Board member mine owner received £250,000 for training 250 miners.)

Professor Bennett believes that there are too many TECs; they should be halved and should be amalgamated with Chambers of Commerce. There should also be greater flexibility over TEC funding, with TECs being run as businesses.

The criticism that TECs are inefficient, lacking in skilled personnel, and unclear in their mission, may have been true of the early days, but is less true today, although still having some validity.

Professor Bennett is careful to distinguish between the English and Welsh TECs on the one hand, and the Scottish LECs on the other. The LECs 'have been advantaged by a wider remit, larger resources, and a longer experience' and 'whereas the LECs have often started from a strategy of business development led by the needs of business in that area, the TECs have been given a training-led theory and products to sell that are designed by someone else' (p.231). The LECs have been successful as local economic development agents; the TECs are judged as less successful.

There is a strong feeling around that TECs have got two years to prove themselves. There are differences in opinion on how that may be done. Some believe they must get directly involved in training in a major way; others (including Professor Bennett) believe they should keep out of direct training.

In their conclusion, Professor Bennett and colleagues identify seven deficiencies in structure:

- unclear mission
- inadequate empowerment
- conflict in local leadership
- inadequate staff skills to deliver
- inadequate ability of the Board to fulfil its leadership role
- cost inefficiency
- budget uncertainties (p.289).

It is my judgement that some of these are being corrected, (the research was conducted from 1990 to mid-1993) although the role of the Board and budget uncertainties remain problems. Central government should 'let go', but is unlikely to do this, simply because training is such an important political issue. Interestingly, Brendan Evans believes that there should be a national body providing lead to TECs, and that body should be set up by the Department for Education, not the Employment Department. Presently, that is politically unrealistic and may be politically undesirable. Another layer of bureaucracy would gain little support from anyone.

The future of TECs, then must be uncertain. Given the desire for constant change, it would be surprising if they continue in their present form. The London School of Economics group's proposal that TECs should amalgamate with Chambers of Commerce seemed to be well received in my discussions. That could ensure retention of local control as well as better co-ordination of local effort (because the two groups sometimes have nothing to do with each other).

The 1994 National Development Agenda

On the surface, the Employment Department sees a brighter future for TECs and NVQs.

The Secretary of State for Employment seems to have no doubt about the central role of TECs in developing the national vocational and education training systems. The 1994 National Development Agenda's assumption is that a workforce of 'flexible' and 'multi-skilled' individuals will help to deliver economic success. There are four priority areas, labelled:

- skills for success
- maximising young people's potential
- a responsive market
- equipped for employment.

All of the old familiar slogans are there, such as 'training and development needs to be viewed as an investment', together with an emphasis on the 'market'. What is striking is the key role of TECs and the central place of NVQs. In other words, local level interpretation of government policy, and national level assessment with accreditation, are the ways to go.

Also important to the future of vocational education and training is the provision of effective careers advice. It has already been pointed out that the careers services are funded by the Employment Department. Careers officers visit all local schools and interview all potential school leavers. The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) would extend the 'market' logic to careers advice, giving all 16-19 year olds a credit which could be spent in 'an effective and informed market in careers guidance provision'. The CBI claims that this is the 'best way to guarantee that the range of individuals' needs can be satisfied, that individual choices are maximised and that customers remain the focus. A market in careers guidance provision would also result in less bureaucracy'. The quotation also perfectly summarises the government's view of the 'market':

- the individual as a customer
- free choice within the 'market', which is defined by government
- removal of bureaucracy

with wealth being the final goal.

Interestingly, it was the CBI's pressure that led to the introduction of training credits. It was their belief that the skills crisis was actually caused by young people who were just not motivated to train. (That opinion is still common in Australia.) It is clear that the CBI continues to be a major force and will continue to influence future training policy. That was raised as a concern in one interview because, although business leaders may appear to speak in unison, they are really often just repeating statements issued by the small CBI secretariat, or so it was alleged.

Turning again to the 1994 *National Development Agenda*, the following roles are envisaged for TECs (although they are sometimes not the only body to do these things, and they may have

to complete for some projects):

- development of the Investors in People programme
- promotion of life-long learning by individuals
- assessment-based on NVQs
- adult career and training guidance
- extending the use of National Records of Achievement
- evaluating and consolidating open learning credits
- extending youth training credits to the whole country
- pilot the accreditation of unpaid work
- standards development of assessment
- evaluation/dissemination of NVQs
- making GNVQs more widely available
- improving workplace training
- improving equality of access to training
- quality assurance, of TECs themselves and of suppliers
- developing partnerships between economic sectors
- improving the TEC network.

1994 should be a busy year for TECs—if they are allowed to survive!

4 Some issues to consider

As a very general judgement I would say that England has got a lot right in principle (that is, the concepts are good) but has got much which should be questioned in practice. For example, the concept of GNVQs is excellent; TECs are a new and interesting approach to local control and local delivery; a national assessment framework exists on paper; schools are being affected in important ways; the funding model makes sense.

Throughout the report I have drawn attention to issues such as those listed below which I believe merit some further consideration in Australia:

1 the need for schools to change in substantial ways

2 raising the school leaving age to 16 years

3 the importance of a good, general education

4 the importance of a foreign language as a key competency

5 adapting vocational education and training for Asian/Pacific needs

6 warnings about a purely outcomes-driven approach to assessment, but especially outcomes which are just observable skills competencies

7 recognition of attitude (values) development in vocational education

8 the need for a national assessment and accreditation framework, and all that this implies

9 general national vocational qualifications as an important 'bridge' between training and education

10 advantages and disadvantages of training and vocational education being separated

11 three-stage funding of vocational education

12 TECs as an interesting approach to the local control and delivery of training

13 concern about the heavy 'market' orientation of vocational education

14 an apparent lack of trust of the professional.

In this final chapter I want to highlight some of these. They are shown as priority issues and other issues.

Priority issues

Australia is seeking to develop a national system of vocational education and training. There will never be a system until there is a common assessment and accreditation framework. The reason why trainees and students enrol is to receive a qualification. That qualification must have currency (i.e. value) within a national accreditation framework. Preferably, *all* possible qualifications at every level (both 'academic' as well as 'vocational') should inter-relate and fit within the framework. The English have achieved this at least in theory; Australia has not. This is presently Australia's biggest problem and, until it is solved, we shall not have a national system of vocational education and training.

It is particularly important to 15-19 year olds that there be a single system. Part of that system should include something like the English GNVQs. They are an excellent idea, being offered by both schools and colleges.

Next, I hope I shan't weary people by raising (once again) method of assessment. If we are to avoid the alleged gross NVQ errors in England (and my own observations and discussions only reinforced the main criticisms being made), then our assessment must not be restricted to (narrow) outcomes.

Competency statements (of a sensible quantity, developed and tested in the workplace, and of practical use to both trainer and trainee) based on outcomes which are assessable must, without question, form an important part of the assessment of training. But the assessment of underpinning knowledge and understanding as well as values, by more appropriate means, must also be a part of the overall assessment. Fortunately, Australia still has time to deal with this matter.

I shall not labour the next point, just raise the question : What kind of society do we want? Those who view everything in terms of the 'market', and every success is judged by the 'bottom-line', should consider the ultimate expression of that commitment insofar as vocational education and training are concerned. A laissez faire approach cannot be defended. But a 'market' *driven* approach with its accompanying attitudes must be questioned and must be debated. In Australia it has never been debated widely, merely accepted, and that is why I am raising it in this report. There is an assumption that if vocational education is 'market driven' then this will automatically produce desirable outcomes, such as efficiency and cost-effectiveness. But will it? And shouldn't there be much more to vocational education?

Other issues

There is unanimous opinion in England that good, general, education is essential for all 15-19 year olds, and that England has fallen well behind in this (compared to European competitors).

Within English vocational education and training, the attempt to deal with general education is through core skills across GNVQs, but it is difficult to see how that approach will work for two reasons. First, the whole range of core skills is not being taken seriously (some are regarded as more important that others); second, the way core skills are presently being assessed in GNVQs (or, more correctly, not being assessed) will ensure that, at best, they assume a secondary importance. The importance of a good, general education for all young people (with a special emphasis on numeracy and literacy) cannot be overemphasised, and that must not be forgotten in Australia.

The approach to three-stage funding of vocational education in England has much to commend it. Glaringly obvious mistakes are being made in some of the detailed application, but conceptually it makes sense. Also, the approach to 'core funding' (via the Department for Education) and 'competitive funding' (via the Employment Department, through TECs) also bears consideration.

A doctrinaire approach to outcome payment does not work and takes little account of practicalities. Also, training credits are simplistic and make assumptions about the student's ability to shop around in order to spend the credit. Credits overlook the lack of alternatives in many regions, as well as in some curriculum areas. They also assume that trainees always make the right decision the first time and that they have the information to do so.

The TECs are a good idea in principle. There are some obvious weaknesses, not least of all the fact that there has never been an agreed set of objectives for them. However, they do allow for local business involvement in local training delivery. Australia would do well to consider something like the concept of TECs, whilst avoiding their practical mistakes which, alas, may lead to their demise.

I'd like to have heard the word 'co-operation' a lot more. In fact, it was only ever used in my Employment Department meeting. Why is this? Perhaps because the changes in England are industry-dominated and industry-led. The professional educator is mostly being ignored. Indeed, the implicit government line seems to be that the professional cannot be trusted, and so elaborate ways have been developed to keep a close watch on professionals, to ensure they are giving value for money. However, what is needed in a healthy society is co-operation and partnership, not domination. I do not believe we have domination in Australia, the relationship between the professional educator and business person is generally good, but we must ensure that this continues by, for example, having appropriate committee and board compositions. (The further education colleges are prohibited from being on TEC

Boards, for example.) The impact of the professional educator is especially important when dealing with 15-19 year olds.

Purposely in this report I have not focussed on educational institutions. One important general conclusion, however, about colleges in England is that they now have only a mythical independence; whereas, in fact, there has been increased centralisation and direction. In *mechanistic* terms they know where they are going (all must product a three year strategic plan and a one year student plan but, curiously, not an annual report) and all courses must be nationally accredited; but as one senior administrator said, there does not seem to be a 'big picture' vision. They are efficient at responding to requests for financial information, curriculum information and policy information, but don't seem to have time to stop to think about their core business. The Bishop of Durham has pictured this as 'educational dogs sit up and beg, and those who beg best get two extra lumps of sugar'.

****

I shall end with what I stated earlier; England, for the first time has national systems of training and vocational education, with some integration of activity, especially for 15-19 year olds. Australia has an embryo system. We can learn much from each other.

The purpose of this report is to generate discussion about some of the important issues presently affecting 15-19 year old vocational education and training. I have disagreed with some of the current 'wisdom'. One commentator in England said that in his country 'To disagree is to be seen to betray'. Fortunately, I do not believe that attitude is present in Australia, which is why the report has been written.

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Department for Education

- GNVQ—The new vocational A Levels : a brief guide
- The New Qualifications Framework
- Media release : action plan to strengthen rigour in GNVQs

Further Education Funding Council

- Funding learning

Bishop of Durham

- Dilemmas of freedom
- Democracy, prosperity and the limits of growth
- The market place : No place for general practice?
- Healthy, wealthy and wise?
- The NHS : The Government proposals and some uncomfortable questions.

Employment Department

- Investing in people
- It's a good job you'll get qualified

- Modern apprenticeships
- Higher still—opportunity for all (Scottish Office)

North Yorkshire TEC
- Training pays
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Professor A Smithers, University of Manchester

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Documents and publications listed in the bibliography are available on loan from the NCVER.

Appendix

The following substantial meetings were held and the input of these people to the report is gratefully acknowledged.

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